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78 MONTEVIDEO 3945

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 FA-05 CIAF-00 INB-10

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EXCISE

R 151212Z NOV 78

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7625

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MONTEVIDEO 3945

F.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, UY, AR, FR

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS. RECENT VISIT TO POLITICAL DETAINEE MIGUEL

ANGEL ESTRELLA

REF: 77 MONTEVIDEO 5866 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. FRENCH INDUSTRIALIST YVES FAGUENAUER ON NOVEMBER 9 CONCLUDED A 12-DAY STAY IN MONTEVIDEO ON BEHALF OF POLITICAL DETAINEE MIGUEL ANGEL ESTRELLA. A WORLD-RENOWNED ARGENTINE CONCERT PIANIST, ESTRELLA WAS ARRESTED IN DECEMBER 1977 FOR ALLEGED ACTIVITIES HERE ON BEHALF OF THE ARGENTINE MONONERO TERRORIST MOVEMENT.

THE PRISON VISIT WAS CONDUCTED UNDER ROUTINELY
TIGHT SECURITY RESTRICTIONS. ESTRELLA CONTINUED TO INSIST ON
HIS INNOCENCE AND STATED THAT HIS HEALTH IS SATISFACTORY.

END SUMMARY.

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2. ON 9 NOVEMBER, FRENCH INDUSTRIALIST YVES FAGUENAUER AND HIS WIFE CONCLUDED A PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL 12-DAY VISIT TO MONTEVIDEO ON BEHALF OF POLITICAL DETAINEE MIGUEL ANGEL ESTRELLA. ESTRELLA, A WORLD-RENOWNED ARGENTINE CONCERT PIANIST, WAS IMPRISONED IN URUGUAY LAST DECEMBER FOR INVOLVEMENT WITH A MONTONERO TERRORIST UNIT USING MONTEVIDEO AS A PLANNING BASE (REFTEL). THE PURPOSE OF FAGUENAUER'S TRIP WAS TO VISIT ESTRELLA IN PRISON AND TO URGE GOU OFFICIALS TO DEAL LENIENTLY WITH HIS CASE, PERHAPS TO THE POINT OF ALLOWING HIM TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. WIDESPREAD NOTORIETY IN EUROPE CONCERNING ESTRELLA'S ARREST LED TO THE FORMATION OF SEVERAL "FREE MIGUEL ESTRELLA" GROUPS, NUMBERING AS MEMBERS MANY PROMINENT PERSONS FROM THE ARTISTIC/CULTURAL WORLD. ALTHOUGH FAGUENAUER IS ACTIVE IN SUCH GROUPS, HIS VISIT TO MONTEVIDEO WAS CHARACTERIZED AS PERSONAL FOR THE MOST PART, BASED ON A LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP WITH ESTRELLA.

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3. FAGUENAUER'S VISIT WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR THE PERIOD
30 OCTOBER - 4 NOVEMBER. HOWEVER, WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF
ARRIVAL, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT PERMISSION TO VISIT ESTRELLA
AT LIBERTAD PRISON COULD NOT BE OBTAINED WITHIN THAT PERIOD.

PERMISSION FOR A VISIT BY FAGUENAUER (FOR NOT
HIS WIFE) FINALLY WAS GIVEN AND ON 8 NOVEMBER HE TRAVELLED TO
LIBERTAD PRISON TO SEE ESTRELLA, ACCOMPANIED BY FONOFF
HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER CARRESSE.

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4. AT LIBERTAD, FAGUENAUER AND ESTRELLA WERE ACCORDED ROU-
TINE PRISON-VISIT TREATMENT: BEING SEATED ON OPPOSITE SIDES
OF A GLASS PANEL AND CONVERSING BY TELEPHONE, WITH PRISON
GUARDS IN ATTENDANCE. THE FRENCH CONSUL ACTED AS INTERPRETER
BECAUSE AUTHORITIES ROUTINELY INSIST THAT ALL CONVERSATIONS
WITH PRISONERS TAKE PLACE IN SPANISH. REPORTEDLY, ESTRELLA
VIGOROUSLY PROTESTED HIS INNOCENCE. HE ALSO STATED THAT HE
WAS IN GOOD HEALTH, AN ASSERTION WHICH REPORTEDLY WAS CONFIRMED
BY HIS APPEARANCE AND MANNER. (THIS COINCIDES WITH REPORTS
FROM OTHERS WHO ALSO HAVE VISITED ESTRELLA.) HE CONFIRMED THAT
HE HAD BEEN GIVEN A MODEL KEYBOARD ON WHICH TO PRACTICE PIANO
AND WAS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A PRISON PROJECT TO PIPE CLASSICAL
MUSIC INTO THE CELLS.

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THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE VISIT WILL DEPEND ON HAGUENAUER'S
ACTIONS UPON RETURNING TO FRANCE. IF HE DESCRIBES HIS TRIP
IN A BALANCED MANNER, THE TRIP WILL, INDEED, HAVE AIDED
ESTRELLA AND ALL OTHER URUGUAYAN DETAINEES

8. FOR EMBASSY PARIS: PLEASE TRANSMIT ANY FURTHER DEVELOP-
MENTS ON VISIT, ESPECIALLY ANY PRESS STATEMENTS BY HAGUENAUER OR
OTHER PRO-ESTRELLA NOTABLES.

9. FOR EMBASSY LONDON: PLEASE COMMUNICATE SUBSTANCE OF CABLE
TO YEHUDI MENUHIN, WHO HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN CASE.

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